DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 108 139 88 CS 001 907

TITLE	Project Read.
INSTITUTION	Pittsburgh Public Schools, Pa.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	74
NOTE	8p.; Not available in hard copy due to marginal legibility of original document; See CS 001 934 for "Effective Reading Programs: Summaries of 222 Selected Programs"
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.76 PLUS POSTAGE. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Disadvantaged Youth; *Effective Teaching; Elementary Education; Individualized Reading; *Reading Improvement; *Reading Instruction; *Reading Programs; Reading Skills
IDENTIFIERS	Effective Reading Programs; Elementary Secondary Education Act Title III; ESEA Title III; Exemplary Reading Programs; Right to Read

ABSTRACT

One of the twelve exemplary programs summarized in the Introduction to Right to Read's "Effective Reading Programs: Summaries of 222 Selected Programs" (CS001934), this program serves first through fifth graders in four inner-city schools with an individualized reading program, emphasizing the decoding process in the primary grades, and comprehension and interpretation in the intermediate grades. The primary-level curriculum is the same for all children, beginning with letter sounds and blending, and progressing to programed readers. The children progress through the lessons at individual rates. The intermediate-level curriculum uses a reading center stocked with a wide variety of materials. Materials and activities relate to 500 objectives, each of which has a check-in and check-out test and prescriptions for using reading center materials. Diagnostic tests are used to indicate the level at which each child should be working and, therefore, the specific objective toward which each child should work. (WR/AIR)

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PROGRAM AREA: Reading/Disadvantaged

PROJECT TITLE: Project Read

LOCATION: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

SOURCES AND LEVEL OF FUNDING: Title III ESEA $50,000
Local School District $10,000

PROGRAM START DATE: 1970

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:

Goals and objectives. Project Read is designed to help elementary pupils achieve proficiency and skill in reading. The program is individualized and emphasizes the decoding process of learning to read at the primary grade level and comprehension and interpretation at the intermediate grade level.

Context. The program operates in four inner-city Pittsburgh schools. The transciency level in the schools using Project Read is very high. For the city-wide system as a whole the changeover rate is approximately 20%, and it is slightly higher in the four project schools. These four schools were selected to use the program because they were showing poor student reading achievement. All first through fifth grade students attending these schools participate. The students are 100% Black and come from low income families (annual income averaging under $6,000) residing in the inner-city area.

Program Description.

Grade level, years of operation, size--The program has been in operation since the 1970-71 school year. It presently serves 820 students in the first through fifth grades.

Staffing, inservice training--The program is staffed by a district level administrator who spends approximately 1/6 time on the program, a full time project director, 32 full time teachers, and 4 part time paraprofessionals. Inservice training is provided to teachers on an individual basis by the Project Director who spends three months on-site at the school. During this time a substitute is hired to fill in for the teachers as they are released for training. Each teacher spends one hour a day, two days a week with the Project Director. On a third day each week, during this three month period, teachers observe other Project Read sites. The training familarizes teachers with the structure of Project Read and the Primary or Intermediate phase curriculum. Simulation and role-play activities are used extensively.

The paraprofessionals are given training for a half hour before school during the three month period, and also sit in on certain teacher training sessions. The paraprofessionals do not have an instructional role; they assist with materials and organization in the reading centers. However, they do have equal status with teachers in the reading center. Their inservice training focuses on cataloguing, retrieval, and storage of materials, as well as duplicating materials.

CS001907

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Curricula--There are several major program features:

- Training in decoding skills followed by training in comprehension skills
- Students progress at own rate
- Students start on same learning path, but eventually diverge based on diagnostic data
- Wide variety of alternative materials and instructional strategies used to meet instructional objectives

There are two phases to Project Read: A Primary phase for grades 1-3 which emphasizes decoding skills, and an Intermediate phase for grades 4 and 5 which focuses on comprehension and interpretation. The entire program is individualized. At the primary level the learning path is the same for all students but the rate of progress for each child varies. In the Intermediate phase, learning paths and rates vary as do the methods and materials used.

The Primary curriculum is divided into four main stages. The first, a letter-sound stage, and the second, the blending stage, are a locally developed curriculum. In these two stages the students frequently participate in learning games with the teacher and a group of students. A step-by-step procedure is used in which the teacher, and then the child, says each letter sound, slowly combines the sounds into a word, quickly combines the sounds into a word, and finally says the word. The third and fourth stages of the primary phase employ programmed readers. The programmed readers are supplemented by informal reading periods. At these times, teachers use a wide range of reading activities. The activities are designed to reinforce and enrich the primary reading curriculum. A variety of materials, including worksheets and audiovisual aids, are used in the informal reading period. During this time, too, there is emphasis on reading for pleasure and practice.

The Intermediate phase for fourth and fifth graders employs a reading center approach. The reading center is a room stocked with a wide variety of materials where individual and group study takes place. All activities relate to 500 instructional objectives. Each objective contains a check-in and check-out test and prescriptions that correspond to materials in the reading center. Objectives are prescribed on the basis of diagnostic test information. The tests indicate the level at which a student should be working. The objectives are grouped according to these levels. At each level, certain objectives are termed "crucial" and students begin work on these objectives.

Materials--The program is individualized and a wide variety of material is used. Materials relate to instructional objectives which contain alternative learning prescriptions and related check-in and check-out tests. The materials are convenient and accessible and most are self-directing and self-correcting. The major items of equipment and material consist of the following:

Sounds and Blending Program

Programmed Reading Series

High Intensity Management System

Trade books, learning games, writing supplies, cassette recorder

Time involved--In the Primary phase the first three periods of the day are devoted to Project Read. This makes a total of 120 minutes a day, five days a week. During the first period the teacher moves around the room checking student work. In the second period she works with groups of students, and the third period is a free, reinforcement period. At the Intermediate level, students spend one 40-minute period each day in the reading center.

Facilities--First grade activities take place in the self-contained classrooms. Second and third grade activities also take place in the classrooms but there is some cross-grading where second grade students work in third grade rooms and vice-versa. The reading centers which are used at the fourth and fifth grade levels are separate areas or rooms which are designed to be attractive and informal. Each center varies according to building characteristics, but typically the centers are characterized by carpeting, small groups of tables and chairs, couches, colorful charts and posters.

Cost. The total cost of the porgram is $60,000, including salaries. The cost of instructional materials for a class of 30 is approximately $1500. After the initial start-up costs, annual replacement cost for a class of 30 students is approximately $500 per year.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS: (See attached section.)

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS:

Evaluation conducted by. The Department of Education Development, Section of Instructional Planning, of the Pittsburgh Board of Public Education conducted the evaluation of Project READ.

Sample size and method. First, second, and third grade students enrolled at Crescent School in Pittsburgh participated in the program evaluation. Crescent School is an inner school in Pittsburgh and was selected as the development site because parents of children enrolled there had expressed dissatisfaction with the reading achievement of their children. A control school was selected, matched on the following academic and socioeconomic variables obtain in a 1969 demographic survey:

Variable	Crescent	Control
a. Size and organization of the school	803 students; 41 teachers	876 students; 35 teachers
b. Racial composition of the student body	100% Black	99.9% Black
c. Median I.Q. for sixth graders	84	95
d. Average family income	$6800	$6100
e. Percentage of families with fathers as head of household	70%	62%
f. Occupational classification of the head of household	2.75[a]	2.93[a]
g. Family mobility	.21[b]	.35[b]

[a]Ratio of professional to unemployed and housewife.

[b]Proportion of families expecting to move/number of respondents.

Achievement test data were obtained in May of each school year for the following numbers of first, second, and third graders in each school (numbers vary for the different subtests):

Grade	Year	Crescent	Control
1	1971	102	96-99
2	1972	96-97	79-106
3	1973	77-79	86-95

There are four classes per grade in both the experimental and control schools.

Measures. Scores on the following Wide Range Achievement Tests (WRAT) and Metropolitan Achievement Tests (MAT) were obtained for each grade:

Grade	Instrument	Reliability
1, 2, 3	WRAT Reading Level 1	Reported in Buros' MMY as .98%, termed "questionably high"
1	MAT Primary I Word Analysis	
1	MAT Primary I Word Knowledge	
2	MAT Primary II Reading	MAT reliabilities reported in Buros' MMY as "adequate"
2	MAT Primary II Work Knowledge	
3	MAT Elementary Reading	
3	MAT Elementary Word Knowledge	

WRAT was chosen on the basis of the greater reliability afforded by its individualized testing; the MAT, administered system-wide in Pittsburgh, is customarily used to provide a survey of end-of-year reading skills.

Data collection. Testing was conducted in May of each school year. Because the WRAT is not normally used in the Pittsburgh Public School System, it was administered by teams of clinical reading specialists who had not been previously associated with Project READ. The MAT was administered simultaneously in the two schools to classroom groups according to the system-wide procedure of administration and scoring by classroom teachers.

Comparison method. Mean scores on each test administered at the end of each year over the three-year period of the analysis were compared; independent sample t-tests were reported. Raw scores were used in the statistical analyses, and mean grade equivalents are also reported. It should be noted that although the study is longitudinal, this is not a pure cohort group. There is reported, however, an end-of-grade-three WRAT mean for a cohort of 41 pupils at Crescent School who had entered first grade three years earlier.

Data analysis. Comparisons between the mean scores for the treatment and control groups are shown below:

Grade	Test	Mean (N) Control	Mean (N) Exp.	Difference: SD Units	t-test sig. at .05
1	WRAT	35.4(99)	40.4(102)	.64	YES
1	MAT I Word Analysis	23.5(96)	30.0(102)	.83	YES
1	MAT I Word Knowledge	22.5(96)	25.5(102)	.38	YES
1	MAT I Reading	22.2(96)	23.3(102)	.13	NO
2	WRAT	47.5(106)	54.0(97)	1.00	YES
2	MAT II Word Knowledge	20.5(92)	24.1(96)	.40	YES
2	MAT II Reading	22.4(79)	27.3(97)	.51	YES
3	WRAT	54.4(86)	61.3(77)[a]	.65	YES
3	MAT E Word Knowledge	22.8(95)	27.0(79)	.47	YES
3	MAT E Reading	18.3(95)	21.7(79)	.48	YES

[a] A subset of the third grade experimental groups (N=41) that remained continuously in Project READ all three years showed a mean WRAT score of 63.4 which was not significantly different from the remaining experimental (t=.85) group.

Differences in the mean grade equivalents for the experimental and control schools and percentages of experimental and control subjects in each school exceeding grade level are shown below:

Grade	Test	Grade Equivalent		% above Grade Level	
		Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental
1	WRAT	1.8	2.1	50%	65%
1	MAT I WK	1.7	1.8	27	37
1	MAT I WA	1.7	2.3	25	55
1	MAT I Reading	1.8	1.8	22	30
2	WRAT	2.7	3.5	43	69
2	MAT II WK	2.4	2.6	16	34
2	MAT II Reading	2.4	2.7	20	35
3	WRAT	3.5	4.5[a]	37	53
3	MAT E WK	3.1	3.3	13	24
3	MAT E Reading	2.9	3.4	13	29

[a] For the 41 experimental subjects that were enrolled in the program all three years at the end of the third grade, the average grade three WRAT mean grade quivalent was 4.9 with 66% exceeding grade level.

Additional data. In order to examine whether Project READ was differentially effective for high and low I.Q. students (split at I.Q. = 100), an analysis of variance of second grade WRAT scores showed a significant treatment effect, a significant I.Q. effect, and not Treatment x I.Q. interaction.

Also Vaughan Perception Test (VPT) scores and scores on the Rosner Auditory Test (RAT) were correlated with WRAT and MAT scores for grade one students. There was little correlation between the VPT and either the WRAT or MAT, but the Rosner correlated .74 with MAT Word Knowledge, .69 with MAT word Analysis, .68 with MAT Reading, indicating that auditory training should be incorporated into the reading program.

Educational significance. Project READ's effect was maintained over the three primary grade levels reported. Mean differences between the experimental and control conditions ranged from .6 to 1.0 standard deviation units on the Wide-Range Achievement Test. All of the comparisons on the Metropolitan Achievement Test except MAT Primary I Reading were statistically significant and ranged (with the one insignificant exception) from .4 to .8 standard deviation units. The data also suggest that the contrasts at second and third grade would be even larger for pure first grade cohorts.